

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 05900 241223Z

41

ACTION EA-13

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 883

INFO USLO PEKING

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD EAGR CH

SUBJ: U.S. FIRMS EXPECT TO VISIT PRC MEAT PACKING FACILITIES

SUMMARY: A PARTY FROM AMERICAN FIRMS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO VISIT A PRC CANNERY AND ASSOCIATED SLAUGHTERING FACILITIES THIS FALL. THE CHINESE APPARENTLY ARE WILLING TO INCLUDE USDA EXPERTS IN THE GROUP ON THE SAME BASIS AS IN THE GRAIN COMPANIES' DELEGATION. END SUMMARY.

1. A PARTY FROM TWO AMERICAN FIRMS AND THEIR BRITISH BANKER HAVE BEEN INVITED TO THE PRC FOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS IN LATE SEPTEMBER/EARLY OCTOBER TO VISIT, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE MEI LING CANNERY IN SHANGHAI AND ASSOCIATED SLAUGHTERING FACILITIES. PARTY WILL INCLUDE ATALANTA AND SCHRODER INTERNATIONAL REPS AND PARTY FROM SCHRODER BANK, LED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, WHO HEADS THE WHOLE SCHRODER GROUP OF COMPANIES. THE CHINESE ARE ALSO WILLING TO HAVE RELEVANT EXPERTS FROM USDA INCLUDED, APPARENTLY ON SAME BASIS AS IN CASE OF TCK SMUT, I.E. THEY ARE EXPERTS ACTING IN PRIVATE CAPACITY NOT AS USG OFFICIALS.

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PAGE 02 HONG K 05900 241223Z

2. INTENT ON PART OF THE US FIRMS IS, PARTLY, TO USE THE VISIT AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR USDA OFFICIALS TO SEE CHINESE FACILITIES IN THE HOPE THAT THEY CAN THUS ACQUIRE ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE TO MOVE ALONG TO THE NEXT STEP IN CONSIDERING WHAT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR CHINESE MEAT PACKING INDUSTRY TO MEET USDA STANDARDS. THE CHINESE WERE PROBABLY AWARE OF THIS REASONING ON THE PART OF THE FIRMS WHEN THEY AGREED TO ALLOW USDA OFFICIALS TO COME AS PART OF THE PARTY.

3. ACCORDING TO BIDDLE-SAWYER (THE BRITISH IMPORT-EXPORT HOUSE), THE CHINESE ALLOW BRITISH (AND OTHER EUROPEAN?) INSPECTORS TO VISIT THEIR CANNING, SLAUGHTERING AND LIVESTOCK FACILITIES ON A FAIRLY REGULAR BASIS. HOWEVER, THE PRC INSISTS ON ISSUING THEM ONLY TOURIST VISAS AND ASSERTING THAT THEY ARE MAKING PRIVATE VISITS. THUS, ALLOWING USDA REPS AS PART OF SCHRODER-ATLANTA GROUP APPEARS TO BE RIGHT IN CHARACTER. THE CHINESE APPARENTLY HAVE ALSO SAID (IN TALKS WITH ATLANTA?) THAT THEY WOULD SET UP SEPARATE FEED LOTS AND BRAND ANIMALS INTENDED FOR EXPORT. AGAIN, THIS APPEARS TO BE MERELY A CONTINUATION OF PRACTICES ALREADY BEGUN IN RESPONSE TO UK AND EUROPEAN REQUIREMENTS.

4. A VISIT SUCH AS THAT DESCRIBED ABOVE -- AND PARTICULARLY THE INCLUSION OF USDA EXPERTS IN THE PARTY-- WOULD PUT ATLANTA WAY OUT IN FRONT OF OTHER US COMPANIES THAT ARE INTERESTED IN IMPORTING PRC MEAT PRODUCTS. THUS, THE INFORMATION ABOUT IT IS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE AND SHOULD BE CLOSELY HELD.

5. THE SCHRODER BANK PARTY ALSO EXPECTS TO VISIT PEKING AND TO HOLD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BANK OF CHINA ON OTHER MATTERS.
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